Menu Planning: How to Serve a Reimbursable Meal

All meals served in the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) must meet certain requirements in order to receive reimbursement. These requirements, including the meal patterns and recordkeeping, help the menu planner in providing well-balanced, nutritious meals that meet the nutritional and energy needs of children. This toolkit page walks you through some of the SFSP requirements to make sure you receive reimbursement for the meals served at your summer site.

The Basics: Meal Pattern Requirements

The SFSP meal pattern is practical, flexible and allows sponsors to create recipes and menus that are nutritious and consistent with the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*. The chart below outlines the required food components and minimum serving size of each food component for breakfast, lunch, supper and snacks. All food components that make up a reimbursable meal must be offered in ordered to be considered for reimbursement and should be served to all children at the same time.

Breakfast Meal Pattern
Select All Three Components for a Reimbursable Meal

1 milk	1 cup	fluid milk
1 fruit/vegetable	1/2 cup	juice,[1] and/or vegetable
1 grains/bread[2]	1 slice 1 serving 3/4 cup 1/2 cup 1/2 cup	bread or combread or biscuit or roll or muffin or cold dry cereal or hot cooked cereal or pasta or noodles or grains

[1] Fruit or vegetable juice must be full-strength.
[2] Breads and grains must be made from whole-grain or enriched meal or flour. Cereal must be whole-grain or enriched or fortified.

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Lunch or Supper Meal Pattern
Select All Four Components for a Reimbursable Meal

1 milk	1 cup	fluid milk
2 fruits/vegetables	3/4 cup	juice,[1] fruit and/or vegetable
1 grains/bread[2]	1 slice 1 serving 1/2 cup 1/2 cup	bread or cornbread or biscuit or roll or muffin or hot cooked cereal or pasta or noodles or grains
1 meat/meat alternate	2 oz. 2 oz. 2 oz. 1 large 1/2 cup 4 Tbsp. 1 oz. 8 oz.	lean meat or poultry or fish[3] or alternate protein product or cheese or egg or cooked dry beans or peas or peanut or other nut or seed butter or nuts and/or seeds[4] or yogurt[5]

[1] Fruit or vegetable juice must be full-strength.
[2] Breads and grains must be made from whole-grain or enriched meal or flour. Cereal must be whole-grain or enriched or fortified.
[3] A serving consists of the edible portion of cooked lean meat or poultry or fish.
[4] Nuts and seeds may meet only one-half of the total meat/meat alternate serving and must be combined with another meat/meat alternate to fulfill the lunch or supper requirement.
[5] Yogurt may be plain or flavored, unsweetened or sweetened

Snack Meal Pattern
Select Two of the Four Components for a Reimbursable Snack

1 milk	1 cup	fluid milk
[1] fruit/vegetable	3/4 cup	juice,[1] fruit and/or vegetable
1 grains/bread[2]	1 slice 1 serving 3/4 cup 1/2 cup 1/2 cup	bread or cornbread or biscuit or roll or muffin or cold dry cereal or hot cooked cereal or pasta or noodles or grains
1 meat/meat alternate	1 oz. 1 oz. 1 oz. 1/2 large 1/4 cup 2 Tbsp. 1 oz. 4 oz.	lean meat or poultry or fish[3] or alternate protein product or cheese or egg or cooked dry beans or peas or peanut or other nut or seed butter or nuts and/or seeds or yogurt4

[1] Fruit or vegetable juice must be full-strength. Juice cannot be served when milk is the only other snack component.
[2] Breads and grains must be made from whole-grain or enriched meal or flour. Cereal must be whole-grain or enriched or fortified.
[3] A serving consists of the edible portion of cooked lean meat or poultry or fish
[4] Yogurt may be plain or flavored, unsweetened or sweetened.

Programs operating through Seamless Summer Option (SSO) may use the National School Lunch Program meal patterns found here: http://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/nutrition-standards-school-meals

Number and Types of Reimbursable Meals
Based on the type of summer site you are operating, you may serve up to two or three meals per day.

With their State agency approval, sponsors of open, restricted open and enrolled sites may serve up to two meals each day. The combinations of meals that are allowed to be served in one day are:
- Breakfast and lunch
- Breakfast and supper
- Breakfast and snack
- Lunch and snack
- Supper and snack

- Two snacks

Lunch and supper cannot be served on the same day. However, lunch and supper may be served on different days.

With their State agency approval, sponsors of camps or migrant sites may serve up to three meals each day. The combinations of meals that are allowed are:
- Breakfast, lunch and supper
- Breakfast, lunch and snack
- Breakfast, supper and snack
- Lunch, supper and snack

Documenting the Meals You Serve

Keeping good records of the meals you prepare and serve each day is part of any successful food service operation. Records are a valuable written history of your summer site operations and can be used for future reference when menu planning. They also help sponsors spot trends, what menus work best with the children and decide what changes should be made.

Good recordkeeping is essential because it is the sole basis for reporting the number of meals you serve, and in State reviews records demonstrate that the meals served at your site comply with the SFSP requirements. Full and accurate records must be kept of allowable program costs as well as the number of program meals served to support each claim for reimbursement.

USDA Resources

Regulations and policies:
- **SFSP Meal Pattern requirements, 7 CFR 225.16(d)**
  http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=82e9d659296c5ed008040e8faa4f78ae&node=se7.4.225_116&rgn=div8
- **SFSP records and reports requirements, 7 CFR 225.8**
  http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=b39b4490ac1b2ddf51e5ba68d268ef63&node=se7.4.225_18&rgn=div8
- **SFSP 2014 Reimbursement Rates**
  http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/FR-010714_SFSP.pdf

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- **Meal Service Requirements**, SP 13-2015 (v.2), SFSP 05-2015 (v.2), *Summer Meal Programs Meal Service Requirements Revised Q&As- Revised,* **January 12, 2015**
  http://www.fns.usda.gov/summer-meal-programs-meal-service-requirements-qas-revised

Handbooks
- **Site Supervisor's Guide**
  This guide provides additional information on the requirements for meals served and recordkeeping.
  http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/SiteSupervsGuide.pdf

Toolkit Pages:
- **Menu Planning: Planning Your Menu**
  http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/cnd/SMT-PlanningYourMenu.pdf
- **Menu Planning: Healthy Summer Meals**
  http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/cnd/SMT-HealthySummerMeals.pdf
- **Meal Service Best Practices**
  http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/cnd/SMT-MealServiceBestPractices.pdf

Partner Organizations Resources
Recordkeeping
- **Inventory Management and Tracking Reference Guide,** by the National Food Service Management Institute
  This resource presents information about inventory management and tracking that may be new to school nutrition operators and updates information about traditional inventory management in light of new traceability expectations.
  http://www.nfsmi.org/ResourceOverview.aspx?ID=431

Additional Information
Sponsors and the general public should contact the appropriate State agency for additional guidance. State agencies should contact their FNS Regional Office for additional guidance.

List of FNS Regional Offices: http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns-regional-offices
List of State Agencies: http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Contacts/StateDirectory.htm

USDA and its recipient institutions share responsibility for compliance and oversight to ensure good stewardship of Federal Funds.